

Currently, more than 1 in 10 young people in America are regular users of illicit drugs—that's double the rate of just five years ago. Marijuana use is especially widespread. In the average class of 25 eighth graders, 5 have tried it.

The bad news is not just about marijuana. We have seen a dramatic rise in regular use of all sorts of so-called "hard" drugs, including stimulants such as cocaine and inhalants such as glue, paint, and lighter fluid. Use of LSD is at its highest recorded level. There are now about 2.7 million "hardcore" drug users in America, more than triple the number in 1991. These "hardcore" addicts are the ones most likely to commit crimes to obtain drugs.

DAMAGE CAUSED BY DRUGS

Some people say that a little experimenting with drugs can't cause any harm. They are wrong.

For example, today's marijuana is 2 to 5 times more powerful than a generation ago. Every reputable scientific study concludes that marijuana use impairs judgment and learning and hurts the heart, lungs, and other organs. Perhaps most damaging, evidence shows that marijuana can be a "gateway" to stronger drugs. A teenager who smokes marijuana is 79 times more likely to have an addictive problem later in life.

Over 25,000 people die every year in America from causes related to illegal drugs. Drugs are involved in over half of the murder and violent crime in this country. Children who use drugs are much more likely to drop out of school. One-quarter of America's trillion-dollar health bill each year is drug-related. Abuse of illegal drugs costs businesses an estimated \$60 billion each year in lost productivity due to absenteeism, accidents, and medical claims.

EROSION OF ATTITUDES

Why are more people using drugs? The simple answer is: attitudes. In recent years, there has been a significant erosion of our negative attitude towards drugs.

1. Social approval

When a society sends the message that drug abuse is wrong—as we did a decade ago—drug use declines. When it fails to send this message, drug abuse rises—as it has since 1990. Leaders in Washington and throughout the country stopped speaking out enough on the dangers of drugs. The recent efforts in Arizona and California to legalize marijuana for "medicinal" purposes—which I oppose—send exactly the wrong message to our young people.

2. Perception of risk

There is another, related factor: perception of risk. Kids will not stop using drugs unless they understand the real physical dangers drug cause. Last year in Boston, Massachusetts 50,000 people attended a so-called rally supporting the legalization of marijuana. On the same day, a few blocks away, an anti-drug rally drew only 500. We are clearly failing in our duty to educate the younger generation about the dangers of drugs, and to express our disapproval of them.

SUPPLY VS. DEMAND

Some argue that we focus on education and prevention at the expense of cracking down on drug suppliers. We do need to fight the drug supply, and I have supported steps to penalize both domestic and foreign drug producers and dealers. But we should recognize that as long as Americans are willing to spend billions of dollars a year on illicit drugs, the traffickers and pushers will find ways to meet that demand.

CONCLUSION—RESOURCES SHOULD MATCH RHETORIC

I am pleased that our 1997 National Strategy emphasizes education and prevention.

The old adage says "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." When it comes to drugs, for each dollar we spend on prevention, we save seven dollars in crime, health, and welfare costs. And the moral benefit of saving our young people from the scourge of drugs is incalculable.

Nevertheless, while we have increased the federal anti-drug budget to more than \$15 billion for 1997, over two-thirds of this is going to international and domestic efforts to stop supply. We should allocate more resources to our top priority of demand reduction.

The real irony of the drug problem, then, is that we know what to do about it—but we're not doing it, or not doing enough of it. It is encouraging that education and prevention are the top priorities of our national strategy. We should make them our top priorities in southern Indiana, too.

SOLVAY, NEW YORK HIGH SCHOOL BAND WINS TOP HONORS IN THE NATIONAL HERITAGE MUSIC FESTIVAL

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 9, 1997

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Solvay, New York High School band and jazz combo for their first place honors at the national American Heritage Music Festival.

This dedicated group of 76 musicians traveled to Washington on Friday, April 4 and competed against bands from all over the Nation. The jazz band and the high school band each won separate first place awards.

Solvay High School won the award for best overall performance and both bands received scores above 90, putting them in the highest category for their performances.

The event that made Solvay's performance unique came in the middle of the concert band's slow song, where the musicians put down their instruments to sing. This added theatrical touch impressed the judges, and invigorated spectators. Indeed, when this talented group arrived back in Solvay, with police cars and fire engines escorting them to the high school where they received their heroes welcome, parents and classmates cheered, still displaying the excitement of the competition.

Our central New York community is proud of the hard work and dedication displayed by the Solvay bands.

Congratulations to the 76 members of the Solvay High School concert band and jazz combo for their impressive achievement.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THIELE KAOLIN

HON. CHARLIE NORWOOD

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 9, 1997

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the founding of one of the 10th District of Georgia's most important employers—Thiele Kaolin Co.

Thiele Kaolin was chartered on October 22, 1946, and began operations on January 1, 1947. Thiele employs more than 500 Georgians, most of whom live in the 10th District.

Thiele employs these Georgians in the mining of kaolin, which is used primarily as an additive for paper products. The glossy look and feel of the magazines you read comes from kaolin. Thiele sends kaolin to many places in America and other countries and is one of the largest exporters through the port of Savannah.

Thiele is a valuable and responsible member of the State and local community through its support of the Adopt-a-School Program, local recreation league teams for all ages, community volunteer fire departments, fine arts appreciation programs, and generous charitable contributions to churches, schools, various civic and health related organizations, and colleges and universities throughout the State.

Thiele is more than just an employer. Thiele is more than just a source of tax revenue for government. Thiele is more than just a business. Thiele is part of the community. Thiele is family. As they celebrate their 50th anniversary, I salute a community member, a family member, Thiele Kaolin Co.

QUIPS CAPTURE STATE CROWN

HON. RON KLINK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 9, 1997

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association Class AA Men's Basketball Champions, the Aliquippa High School Quips.

Located in Beaver County in the once thriving steel town of Aliquippa, the players of this team demonstrated the strength, character, and rich tradition that embodies the people of their hometown. This marks the fourth time in the school's history and the third time in eight seasons that the Quips have been crowned State champions in men's basketball. They finished the season with a record of 28-3.

Led by senior point guard and cocaptain Mike Lundy's 13 points Aliquippa defeated cross-state rival Wilkes Barre by a score of 57-50 in the championship game. In a post-game interview with the Beaver County Times, senior center Damian Crute is quoted as saying, "Climbing the ladder (to cut the nets), I felt like I was on top of the world. We climbed the mountain and we're sitting on top now." Indeed Damian, your team has climbed the mountain and the people of Aliquippa and the entire Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania are proud of your efforts.

Once again, congratulations to the students, faculty, and the city of Aliquippa. You have produced a champion in the finest sense of the word. And a special salute to first year coach Mike Zmijanac and his assistants Doug Beiga, Sherman McBride, Marvin Emerson, and Pete Carbone for a job well done.

And so I urge my colleagues to join me in the celebration of the Aliquippa Quips and all of the high school basketball teams in Pennsylvania for a terrific season.